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THE READING PERSPECTIVE OF TESLLE:
THE ENGLISH READING PROFICIENCY TEST OF UFSM

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READING PERSPECTIVE OF TESLLE:
THE ENGLISH READING PROFICIENCY TEST OF UFSM [1]

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RESUMO: O Teste de Suficiência em Leitura em Língua Estrangeira da Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (TESLLE) é uma testagem, com enfoque na habilidade de leitura, que ocorre semestralmente na instituição. Atualmente, o maior público do TESLLE é aluno dos cursos de pós-graduação da instituição que precisa comprovar a habilidade de leitura de textos em uma das cinco línguas oferecidas pelo TESLLE (BECKER, 2013). Este estudo tem como objetivo analisar duas edições do teste de Inglês em comparação com o programa do TESLLE, a fim de identificar sua estrutura, temática e enfoque das questões. Fundamentalmente, busca-se com este trabalho identificar a perspectiva de leitura adotada no TESLLE. O corpus do estudo inclui o teste da 2º edição do ano de 2013 e da 1ª edição do ano de 2014. A análise baseia-se nas características de testagem (MARCHEZAN, 2005), assim como nas competências exploradas nas questões (CELCE-MURCIA et al., 1995; LITTLEWOOD, 2004) e aspectos relacionados a perspectivas de leitura (MARCUZZO, 2004; MOITA LOPES, 1996; NUTTAL, 1996) e gênero textual (BATHIA, 2004). Considerando os resultados obtidos, o teste abrange todos os tópicos previstos no programa. Além disso, em termos de estrutura, as duas edições, apesar de diferentes em extensão, possuem um padrão de questões. Ademais, os resultados indicam que o teste baseia-se numa perspectiva de leitura contemporânea, por abordar questões atuais dos estudos sobre linguagem.
Palavras-chave: Testagem; Teste de Suficiência; Leitura em Inglês como língua estrangeira; Linguística Aplicada.

ABSTRACT: The Teste de Suficiência em Leitura em Língua Estrangeira (TESLLE) is a reading test that is offered twice a year at the Federal University of Santa Maria. Currently, the target audience of TESLLE is graduate students of the institution that must prove their reading skills in one of the five languages offered (BECKER, 2013). This study aims at analyzing two editions of the English test in comparison with the TESLLE syllabus, in order to identify its structure, theme and the focus of the questions. Fundamentally, this study aims at identifying the reading perspective that underlies TESLLE. The corpus of the study is two editions of TESLLE: the second edition of 2013 and the first edition of 2014. The analysis is based on the characteristics of the process of testing (MARCHEZAN, 2005), as well as on the competences explored in the questions (CELCE-MURCIA et al, 1995; LITTLEWOOD, 2004) and aspects related to reading perspectives (MARCUZZO, 2004; MOITA LOPES 1996; NUTTAL, 1996) and genre (BHATIA, 2004). Considering the results, the test covers all the topics that are planned in the program. Moreover, in terms of structure, the two editions, although different in terms of size, have a certain pattern of questions. Furthermore, the results indicate that the test is based on a contemporary reading perspective, addressing current issues in the studies of language.

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INTRODUCTION

Twice a year, the Federal University of Santa Maria (UFSM) offers a proficiency test, called Teste de Suficiência em Leitura em Língua Estrangeira (TESLLE). It is a reading test that usually encompasses five foreign languages: English, French, German, Portuguese (as a foreign language) and Spanish. TESLLE is designed by an organizing committee that belongs to the Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras Modernas of the institution and, according to its regulation, it can only be taken by staff, students and faculty of the institution (UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA MARIA, 2010, p. 1).

The test is a requirement for students that want to apply for a Masters or a Doctoral Degree, in which they need to prove their proficiency in one foreign language for Master's or Doctoral Degree (UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA MARIA, 2014, p. 8). In its second edition of 2013, the testing dynamics changed, and the questions are now only objective (in the past, the questions were discursive and objective). Similar to the previous editions, the TESLLE syllabus (see Appendix 1) is published within the official announcement of each edition of the test on the website of the institution (www.ufsm.br). The syllabus also includes application and registration rules and further information about deadlines and testee's duties and responsibilities on the day of testing.

There are at least two other known studies on TESLLE. One, developed at undergraduation degree, aimed at stablishing a comparison between the field of knowledge of testees and the kinds of question that show the highest error occurrence (BECKER, 2013), whereas the other study, developed as a master's thesis, aimed at discussing reading tests considering testees' point of view (WIELEWICKI, 1997).

According to Becker (2013, p. 1), as TESLLE is applied under confidential circumstances, little information about it is available in relation to feedback, specifically to the kinds of questions that show highest error incidence. In her study, Becker (2013) analyzed lowest and highest grades from four different editions of TESLLE. This quantitative analysis resulted in 183 samples analyzed in order to verify if there was a pattern of lowest grades associated to a specific field of knowledge of testees and to identify which kinds of questions showed the highest number of errors.

The study revealed that among all the lowest grades the recurrent fields of knowledge that appeared were Agrarian Sciences, Health Sciences and Engineering. Regarding error incidence in relation to kind of questions of the tests, Becker (2013, p. 13) affirms that testees had difficulty recognizing information in the text, mainly in relation to logical connectors and reference and that all tests showed errors in questions regarding modality. Furthermore, the results show that testees had difficulty identifying the logical connectors' function (ibidem, p. 18). Becker claims that "modality is a major EFL reading difficulty" (ibidem, p. 17), considering that even though the majority of testees were attending graduate courses, and, for this reason, are exposed to a vast amount of literature in foreign languages, they show many difficulties when testing their English as a Foreign Language reading skill.

In another study on TESLLE, Wielewicki (1997, p . vii) states that, in order to deal with the amount of academic literature published in the English language, graduate students are required to prove their reading skill through proficiency tests to show that they are able to read in a foreign language. The author, in a different approach in relation to Becker (2013), discussed the testing procedures of TESLLE from a perspective that focuses not only on the test itself but also on the testees, trying to understand the aspects that might influence testee's passing score.

Taking into account the testees point of view about their scores on TESLLE, most of them considered their reading skill as satisfactory or good, although 45.9% of the interviewed testees failed in the test (ibidem, p. 131). The researcher concluded that the difficulty experienced by testees might be related to the difference they face when answering questions that ask for specific information and syntax of texts for the accomplishment of reading tasks and the necessary knowledge they should have while reading texts in their own fields or areas of study (WIELEWICKI, 1997, p. 157).

Designed, applied and required by UFSM, TESLLE is a known test in the institution, mostly because of its role in postgraduate programs, and also because it involves staff, students and faculty of the university. For this reason, this study is seen as relevant because of the little research about this topic. As a language teacher in training, I believe it is important to understand the characteristics and structure of this test in order to prepare future testees.

Since the present study focuses on the test itself, the general objective of this paper is to analyze TESLLE in order to understand what is the reading perspective that underlies the test. The specific objectives of this paper are: 1) to investigate in which way the test considers aspects of its syllabus and 2) to identify what are the aspects of the program included in the test. This means that this paper aims at identifying what is planned in the syllabus for the English language test in order to compare it with what is actually presented in the test.

I organized this paper into four main sections: 1) Literature Review; 2) Methodology; 3) Results and Discussion; and 4) Final Considerations.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Differences between evaluation and test

Characterized as a test, TESLLE assess the product of students' knowledge. According to Marchezan (2005, p. 26), there are some differences between evaluating and testing. Evaluating is related to giving feedback about student's results. The relationship between evaluator-evaluated extends to the processes of correction and performance analysis.

On the other hand, according to the author (MARCHEZAN, 2005, p.25), tests aim at establishing testee's knowledge level by classifying them according to their results. For this reason, the procedures of correction and classification are previously decided and standardized. In this case, although testees have access to the results obtained in the test, they do not know the detailed reasons of it. When the results are published, the process is finished.

Moreover, Marchezan (2005, p. 27) presents some features of both kinds of assessments and explains that the test does not require contact between testees and committee because it has its own goals; thus, it is not dependent on teaching. Furthermore, one testee's performance is contrasted with the results of the other ones. In this case, Hughes (1989 apud MARCHEZAN, 2005, p. 30) claims that the test aims at identifying the level of testee's knowledge in relation to others, distinguishing who knows more from those who know less. Testing is, therefore, the process of measuring the product of learning.

On the contrary, the evaluation must be designed by an instructor, because what, when and how to evaluate are part of the teaching process, and these aspects are based on what was effectively practiced in class (MARCHEZAN, 2005, p. 30). Evaluation has its results interpreted regarding predetermined goals. Its objective is not to classify, but to identify who has and who has not learned what was taught. Hughes (1989 apud MARCHEZAN, 2005, p.30) suggests that the purpose of evaluating is to classify people according to their condition of successfully answer a question or a group of questions. Therefore, the evaluation depends on teaching; it is part of the process of teaching and learning. Testees should be aware of these differences in order to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect of a testing process.

1.2 Reading perspectives

As TESLLE is a test focused specifically on the reading skill in a foreign language, some basic principles of reading perspectives need to be addressed. According to Nuttal, "reading has one overriding purpose: to get meaning from a text" (1996, p. 4). In this sense, reading is related to the transference of a message from writer to reader and inevitably all readers get something different from a text (NUTTAL, 1996). As Nuttal describes, a good reader is the one who "interprets a text as the writer intended – except when he/she chooses not to" (1996, p. 18).

According to Marcuzzo (2004, p. 1), the focus of research on foreign language reading was directed to the schema theory approximately three decades ago. This theory was the basis for the development of interactional models on the reading process. According to the author, applied linguists dedicated to research English teaching as a foreign language have been focusing their studies on what they call "critical reading" (ibidem).

This critical perspective of reading is based on previous teaching approaches, such as the communicative approach. According to Moita Lopes (1996, p. 133), the objective of communicative teaching is not necessarily to improve oral skills, but to teach communication through the use of language. Understanding the act of reading as a meaningful skill is important for the readers in order to enhance and realize the different worldviews that are embedded within a text (MOITA LOPES, 1996, p.134).

Furthermore, the author (1996) claims that interactional models do not encompass social aspects that are involved in the reading process. For this reason, Moita Lopes (1996) suggests the complementation of the approach with discourse analysis, in order to develop critical language awareness. By understanding texts as the result of a communicative interaction between participants, readers experience language as a social practice; as an instrument that reflects power relations in society (ibid., p. 138).

The interaction between participants, in this case, between readers and texts, is mentioned by Nuttal, who claims that "the meaning is not lying in the text waiting to be passively absorbed. On the contrary, the reader is actively involved and often has to work to get the meaning out" (1996, p. 10). Regarding the reading difficulties faced by a reader (or a testee, in the case of this study), the author points out that "the only way we can ask questions is to interrogate the text itself" (ibidem).

1.3 Genre and competences

The identification of genres helps testees to interrogate texts. According to Bhatia (2004), genres, although recognized for their dynamism, emerge from the recurrence of human activities and, thus, are recognizable by people of a certain community. In this way, readers should be aware that there are certain textual patterns in which there is a "shared set of communicative purposes" (BATHIA, 2004, p. 23) - people need to express themselves similarly in similar situations. Furthermore, the author mentions that "genre essentially refers to language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals" (ibidem).

In this sense, genre identification is important in order to explore not only the lexicogrammatical features used to express meanings, but also the features that design the text being approached – what is said, by whom it is said, to whom it is said, how and for what purpose. Therefore, the context, along with language resources, plays an important role when reading in a foreign language and should not be disregarded in the process.

In order to understand what is expected from testees regarding this reading perspective, it is necessary to analyze the questions to identify what are the competences needed to accomplish at least the minimum score. The definitions of competence being considered in this study are the ones given by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) and Littlewood (2004).

Celce-Murcia et al. (1995, p. 29) state that there is a need for a description of the components of communicative competence "in order to have more concrete pieces of language to work with". Moreover, Littlewood (2004) mentions that the development in linguistics field conducted to a wider conceptualization of abilities that second language learners need to acquire, and nowadays various aspects of the communicative competence are recognized. Figure 1 presents a comparison between the authors' points of view regarding competences.

Competences according to Celce-Murcia	Competences according to Littlewood
Linguistic competence: basic elements of communication: the sentence patterns and types, the constituent structure, the morphological inflections, and the lexical resources, as well as the phonological and orthographic systems needed to realize communication as speech or writing.	Linguistic competence: knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, semantics and phonology. Understanding the functioning of the language in order to identify the meaning built.
Discourse competence: selection, sequencing and arrangement of words, structures, sentences and utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written text.	Discourse competence: engage in continuous discourse by linking ideas in longer oral/written texts, maintaining longer spoken turns, participating in interaction and opening conversations and closing them.
Strategic competence: knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them.	Pragmatic competence: use the linguistic competence in order to interpret the meaning created by context in oral or written texts and also to convey meanings for it.
Actional competence: conveying and understanding communicative intent, matching actional intent with linguistic form based on the knowledge of an inventory of verbal schemata that carry illocutionary force.	Sociolinguistic competence: use language appropriately in social situations, by conveying suitable degrees of formality when it is necessary.
Sociocultural competence: speaker's knowledge of how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication, in	Sociocultural competence: awareness of the background knowledge and cultural assumptions which affect meanings and

| accordance with the pragmatic factors related to variation in language use. | may lead to misunderstandings in intercultural communication. |

Figure 1 – Definitions of competences based on Celce- Murcia (1995) and Littlewood (2004).

Although Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) and Littlewood (2004) adopt different nomenclature to explain some competences, their definitions complement one another. With the comparison shown in Figure 1, I try to relate both studies in order to complement the definitions that support my analysis. The key concepts presented in this Literature Review (evaluation/test, reading perspectives, genre and competences) support the discussion of the results in section 3.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this section, I explain how the analysis was carried out. I present the data collection procedures in subsection 2.1 and the data analysis procedures in subsection 2.2.

2.1 Data collection procedures

The corpus of the analysis is two editions of the English test - one from the second semester of 2013 (2013-2) and the other one from the first semester of 2014 (2014-1) and the official syllabus. The samples of TESLLE were requested to the organizing committee and granted by them for confidential academic research purposes. The syllabus was easily found online, because it is published twice a year on the official website of the institution, within the official announcement of TESLLE. The data collection occurred in the first semester of 2014 and then the qualitative analysis began.

2.2 Data analysis procedures

The analysis of each test was done separately. Initially, the general structure and specific characteristics of each test were analyzed: the number of questions, the duration of TESLLE, the textual genre approached and the theme of each text. After that, the questions were analyzed one by one and classified in relation to the list of topics presented in the syllabus. In this study, qualitative and quantitative procedures were carried out, the latter regarding the recurrent kinds of question.

In the following section, I present and discuss the results of my analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The TESLLE syllabus presents a list of topics for the design of the test that comprehends general information about its theme and possible topics covered by questions. For this reason, testees may use it as a study guideline. All questions of the two editions of TESLLE were analyzed in relation to this syllabus.

As a starting point, this list was analyzed and combined into four main groups, according to what is presented in the syllabus: 1) comprehension of ideas; 2) organization of ideas; 3) structure of scientific discourse and 4) grammar knowledge. The results show that all questions are included in what is provided in the syllabus. It is important to mention that all questions analyzed were included in lexicogrammar knowledge because the other competences are dependent on basic lexicogrammatical knowledge.

Regarding to the kinds of questions, the results reveal that all questions demand recognition and knowledge of lexicogrammatical structures that realize the ideas in the text. Also, most of the questions focus on the comprehension and organization of general ideas in the text. This means that testees must recognize the main ideas, the secondary ideas, and the relationship between them. Furthermore, they need to identify and recognize argumentative operators, elements of cohesion and coherence and lexicogrammatical elements.

With this analysis it was possible to realize that the TESLLE syllabus is somehow general. Comparing it with other testing syllabus, the UFSM Vestibular syllabus, for example, is more specific in relation to what is expected of testees, as well as it is more specific about the content that may be presented in the test.

In the following subsections, the discussion of results has been organized in two subsections: 3.1) General structure and genre; and 3.2) Kinds of question and competences explored.

3.1 General structure and genre

Based on the analysis of both editions of TESLLE, similar features between themn were identified. However, the total number of questions has changed. In the 2013-2 test, there are 10 objective questions, whereas in the 2014-1 test there are 16 objective questions. However, both tests need to be answered within two hours. This difference in the number of questions in relation to the time-limit of the test might be considered a

negative aspect for testees, because they have the same amount of time to answer more questions. However, more questions give them a broader error margin to achieve the minimum score. It is important to mention that all the questions are designed from a single text on each TESLLE edition and all of them comprise 5 alternatives.

The analysis of the two editions of TESLLE showed that the text that comprises each edition is an exemplar of an academic genre and approaches topics that can be considered relevant for all fields of knowledge, according to what is actually presented in the syllabus.

Regarding the 2013-2 test, the text approached in this edition has as its theme the popularization of scientific knowledge. It has its communicative goal defined and its structure shows characteristics of a journal editorial.
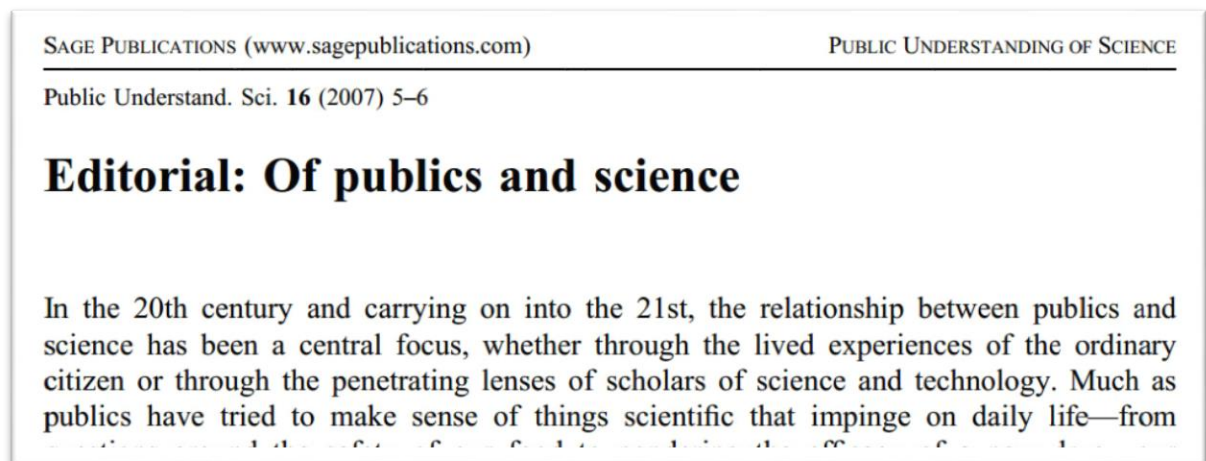
Figure 2 – Detail of layout structure of test 2013-2.

By analyzing the text, it is possible to identify contextual features such as source of publication, references and authorship (Figures 2 and 3).

> dynamic and used to explain different levels of knowledge or the maintenance of ignorance. In this instance, trust is an attribute, a social commodity, a practice. But the institutional dynamics behind each of these features remains to be better understood.
>
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>
> Edna Einsiedel

Figure 3 – Detail of references and authorship of test 2013-2.

By comparing the 2014-1 test with the previous edition, it is possible to observe that in this edition the text approached also presents characteristics of a journal editorial. The layout of this text also includes the name of the publisher, the authorship and its reference, as shown in Figures 4 and 5.

> **Mott Greene**
>
> 1 Any issue of *Nature* today has nearly the same number of Articles and Letters as one from 1950, but about four times as many authors. The lone author has all but 5 disappeared. In most fields outside mathematics, fewer and fewer people know enough to work and write alone. If they could, and could spare the time and effort to do so, their funding agencies and home 0 institutions would not permit it.
>
> confirmed, is a rough 'inverse-square law of scientific productivity'. For every 100 60 authors who each produce a scientific paper in a given period, there will be 25 authors who produce two, 11 who produce three, and one author who produces ten or more.
> The appreciation of Lotka's law has 65 allowed the continuation, in a world of clearly shared credit and hazily specified
>
> relation to the outcome it was designed to measure. Such attempts led to the somewhat 90 occult business of impact factors, impact journals, author rank within a paper, and other such countermeasures to re-establish the utility of citation counting.
> Until very recently, the combination 95 of Lotka's law and impact factors at least held such 'author gaming' to a draw. Now cracks are appearing in the system. It seems that Lotka's law applies only when papers with 100 or more authors 100 are rare. When these become com-

Figure 4 – Detail of authorship and image of test 2014-1.

It is important to mention that in this edition the text includes verbal and non-verbal text, which shows that its original layout was also maintained. In addition, the image is approached within a question of this TESLLE edition, addressing a multimodal reading perspective, subject that will be discussed in the subsection 3.3.
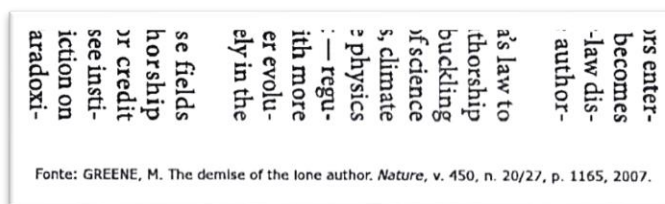
Fonte: GREENE, M. The demise of the lone author. *Nature*, v. 450, n. 20/27, p. 1165, 2007.

Figure 5 – Detail of reference of test 2014-1.

All these features of each TESLLE text show that the texts are authentic, without adjustments or selection of specific topics to serve specific testing purposes. Keeping the editorials in their original layout may assist students to read the texts or to look for specific information more effectively.

Considering that "established members of a particular professional community will have a much greater knowledge and understanding of the use and exploitation of genres than those who are apprentices, new members or outsiders" (BHATIA, 2004, p. 23), I believe that the originality of the texts helps testees understanding them. By recognizing the genre, testees might be aware not only about the lexicogrammatical or rhetorical organization approached, but also about all the features that constitute it as a genre, such as what is said, by whom it is said, to whom it is said, and for what goal or purpose it is said.

In the following subsection, I focus my analysis specifically on the questions.

3.2 Kinds of question

All the questions were analyzed in order to map TESLLE and to identify the recurrent features of the questions approached in both editions of the test. It is important to say that I based my question analysis on my own interpretation of Becker's (2013) results. Basically, the questions were analyzed considering the linguistic exponents that gave clues of what the questions are demanding. It is important to mention that the questions were analyzed as a whole, including its alternatives. With the results obtained, it was possible to perceive not only the recurrent questions, but also the variation and differences between tests 2013-2 and 2014-1. It can be noticed that some kind of questions are presented in one test, but not in the other, as shown in Table 1:

Focus of the question	Number of questions	Description

	2013-2	2014-1	
Clause relations	1	2	"Assinale a alternativa que apresenta *ideia de causa-consequência*"
Genre	1	0	"Considere os seguintes *propósitos comunicativos* de editoriais. Quais desses propósitos estão presentes no editorial 'Of publics and science'?"
Identification of information in the text	2	3	"Considere as afirmações a seguir relacionadas ao primeiro e ao segundo parágrafos do texto. Quais das afirmações anteriores estão em *acordo com o texto*?"
Inference	0	1	"Com base no segmento [...], pode-se *inferir*"
Labelling	0	1	"Associe as colunas de forma a indicar o que cada segmento está fazendo: (*sugerindo, questionando ou exemplificando*)"
Metaphor	0	1	"Considere os seguintes segmentos do texto. São *exemplos de linguagem metafórica*, ou seja, *linguagem figurada*, para se referir à progressão dos pesquisadores na carreira científica"
Modality	2	3	"Assinale a alternativa cujo segmento *revela atitude positiva* do autor sobre o que é dito"
Multimodality	0	1	"O segmento que melhor *resume a imagem* do texto é"
Reference	2	2	"Os *referentes* de 'it' (linha 6) e de 'they' (linha 13) são, respectivamente"
Summary	2	0	"Com base nos três últimos parágrafos do texto, assinale a *alternativa que sintetiza* as duas dimensões que, segundo a editora, demandam maior atenção pelos pesquisadores da área"
Translation	0	2	"O segmento [...] pode ser *traduzido para o português*, sem alteração de sentido, como"
Total	**10**	**16**	

<div align="center">**Table 1 – Kinds of question and occurrence per each TESLLE edition.**</div>

The results show that among the 11 kinds of questions that were mapped, questions regarding identification of information in the text, modality and reference are most common (approximately 54% of the total number of questions). In the following section, the analysis of some of the most relevant questions is presented.

3.3 Competences explored

Regarding the topic "Identification of information in the text", I included all the questions in which testees have to identify the information presented in the text about a specific excerpt or subject. Figure 6 shows an example of a question from the 2014-1 test. This question asks testees to identify which one of the three statements are correct in relation to Lotka's law.

Figure 6 is an example that demands linguistic, discourse and pragmatic competences. As the question asks what is correct about Lotka's law, testees should focus

on this keyword during their reading, in order to save time and look only for the specific information they need.

Figure 6 – Example of question of 2014-1 test.

According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1995), linguistic competence approaches basic elements of communication. Thus, in this case, testees should read the text looking for linguistic clues, regarding the alternatives given in the question. For instance, testees may check in the text if Lotka's law is used to measure the impact factor of scientific journal or if it is used to measure another factor, such as the scientific production of an author. By doing so, they can check information and exclude alternatives. For this reason, discourse competence is an important feature in order to "engage in continuous discourse by linking ideas in longer oral/written texts" (LITTLEWOOD, 2004, p. 503).

Furthermore, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) states that strategic (or pragmatic) competence involves manipulating available language (in this case, the linguistic knowledge of testee) to reach a communicative goal. Although some testees might get confused with the information available in the text because of lack of linguistic or discourse competence, for example, they may compensate their deficiency in these competences by negotiating messages and meanings through the context (CELCE-MURCIA et al., 1995).

The topic "Modality" includes questions in which modalization occurs in terms of adverbial clues within the alternatives. Figure 7 shows an example of a question from the 2014-1 test. It asks testees to identify which alternative reveals the author's positive attitude towards what is said. This is an example of a question that demands pragmatic (or strategic) and linguistic competences from testees. Although some testees may face difficulties on answering this question, they might choose the correct alternative by focusing on the linguistic clues that are presented in this question.

Figure 7 – Example of question of 2014-1 test.

According to Littlewood (2004), pragmatic competence helps readers to use their linguistic resources in order to interpret meanings, "including those where they encounter problems due to gaps in their knowledge" (LITTLEWOOD, 2001, p. 503). Thus, relying on their linguistic competence, testees may identify the meaning built by some content words (for instance, the adverbs "fortunately" and "curiously" and other elements as the verb "predict"), along with the context, in order to select the right answer, which is B.

Within the topic "Reference", the questions in which testees need to identify to what the highlighted words or excerpts refer to were included. In the corpus analyzed, there is the predominance of pronominal reference, such as "it", "they" and "these". Figure 8 is an example of a question from the test 2013-1. In this question, testees must choose

the alternative that represents to what the highlighted words refer to. In this case, discourse and linguistic competences were identified.

2. Os referentes de "it" (linha 6) e de "they" (linha 13) são, respectivamente,

a. "our work" (linha 6) e "Publics" (linha 12).
b. "stock" (linha 6) e "participatory instincts" (linha 13).
c. "a good time" (linhas 5-6) e "both views" (linha 12).
d. "stock" (linha 6) e "both views" (linha 12).
e. "a good time" (linhas 5-6) e "Publics" (linha 12).

Figure 8 – Example of question of 2013-2 test.

In this question, testees should read the excerpt in which the highlighted terms are included and relate the ideas of the sentences, considering the context and the linguistic clues of the text. In terms of discourse competence and cohesion/coherence, Celce-Murcia (2005) states that pronouns are used to substitute words in order to avoid repetition and signals the need of using markers to make discourse cohere.

In this specific question, both terms are anaphors – they retake something that has already been mentioned before. For this reason, in terms of linguistic competence, testees should recognize function words (such as pronouns, which stablish relations between sentences) within the text in order to understand to what are the highlighted words referring to, in order to interpret these pronouns properly and select the correct answer, which is E.

Another question that I want to mention is from the 2014-1 test. Regarding what was discussed in subsections 1.3 and 3.1, Figure 9 shows an example of a question in which testees have to choose one statement among the five alternatives that summarizes the image of the text (Figure 4). In this example, linguistic and discourse competences were identified.
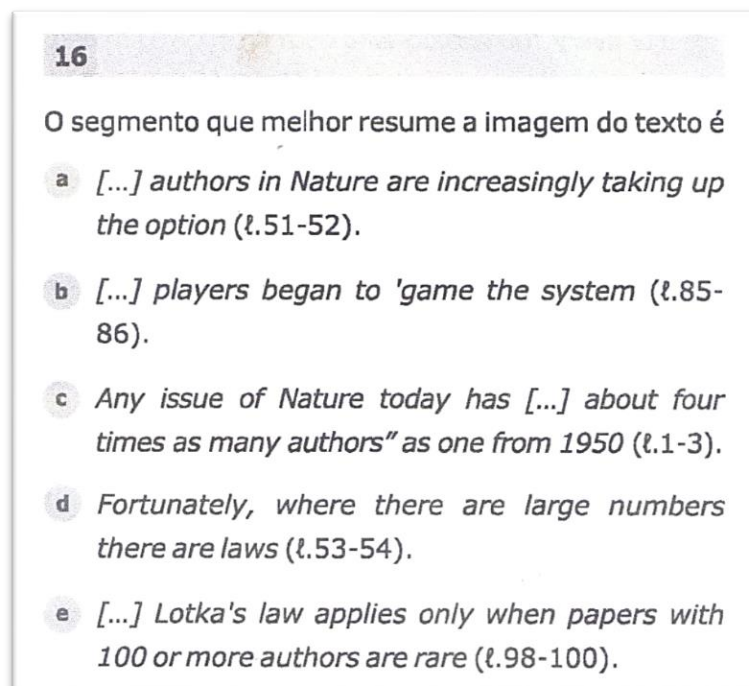
Figure 9 – Example of question of 2014-1 test.

Figure 9 is an example of a question that shows a different feature on TESLLE. The way in which the text chosen for the 2014-1 test was explored shows that there is no intention of substituting or removing the text from its context. Instead of removing the image, the original layout was maintained and explored in a way that a "new reading" could emerge. In this sense, testees should read the image from a multimodal perspective, in which verbal and non-verbal text integrate each other in order to build the meaning.

4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study, I analyzed two editions of the English language test of TESLLE. Regarding the questions analyzed, all of them fit the topics of the syllabus. Furthermore, the theme of the texts explored in the test is also included in what is planned in the syllabus. This is a positive aspect considering that everything that is proposed in the syllabus is actually presented in the test. However, the TESLLE syllabus seems general in relation to its content, and a redesign of its syllabus could benefit not only future testees but also professionals of the field.

Moreover, the recurrent questions of both editions indicate that there is a certain pattern in this testing process. The results show that a current reading perspective underlies the test, considering that TESLLE approaches a genre perspective and multimodal reading, that are current issues in the contemporary studies of language.

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APPENDIX

MINISTÉRIO DA EDUCAÇÃO
UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA MARIA
DEPARTAMENTO DE LETRAS ESTRANGEIRAS MODERNAS

ANEXO A – PROGRAMA DO TESTE DE SUFICIÊNCIA

1 TEXTO: Fragmentos textuais de publicações de cunho científico e acadêmico.

2 TEMA: Único, contemplando áreas de conhecimento básico.

Ex.: Epistemologia do conhecimento, metodologia da pesquisa, trabalho de "Corpus",...

3 PROGRAMA:

3.1 Compreensão das ideias veiculadas pelo autor:

3.1.1 Ideia global;

3.1.2 Reconhecimento das ideias principais e secundárias e articulação entre elas.

3.2 Organização das ideias:

3.2.1 Operadores argumentativos (na gramática da língua, conhecidos por conjunções, pronomes, advérbios);

3.2.2 Elementos de coesão e coerência, isto é, os elementos gramaticais responsáveis pela unidade das ideias do texto.

3.2.3 Elementos linguísticos utilizados pelo autor do texto para veicularem funções da linguagem.

Ex.: negar, explicar, exemplificar.

3.3 A estrutura do discurso científico:

3.3.1 Reconhecimento das posições assumidas pelo autor e/ou outros pesquisadores no texto;

3.3.2 Reconhecimento de suas partes como: conclusão, relato de dados, metodologia, linha de pesquisa.

3.4 Conhecimento linguístico gramatical:

3.4.1 Reconhecimento e utilização de formas gramaticais associadas à veiculação das idéias do texto.

Appendix 1 – TESLLE syllabus.